

and technology have driven much of our economic growth and shaped the lives of every generation of Americans in previously unimaginable ways. As we approach the 21st Century, many of our society's expectations for a better future are dependent upon advances in science and technology.

The science and engineering investments made by the National Science Foundation (NSF) will create new knowledge, spur innovations, foster future breakthroughs, and provide cutting-edge research facilities to help power our Nation in the next century. These investments will help secure the continued prosperity of our economy, improvements in health care and our standards of living, and better education and training for America's students and workers.

This Act will enable the NSF to continue to play an important leadership role in sustaining scientific and technological progress. I am pleased to note that the appropriation authorization levels in H.R. 1273 are the same as proposed in my FY 1999 Budget, and I urge that these amounts be appropriated. The proposed funding for the NSF is part of my Administration's broader, aggressive agenda for science and technology investments throughout the Federal Government, which includes the NSF's participation in the Global Observations to Benefit the Environment Initiative, the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles Program, and the Education and Training Technology Initiative. I especially commend the Congress for authorizing the NSF's participation in the Next Generation Internet Program. This multi-agency program will push the frontiers of computation and communications and help fuel the revolution in information technology.

I want to acknowledge the bipartisan efforts in the House and the Senate that produced this important legislation and, in particular, remember the contributions of the late Steve Schiff of New Mexico, Chairman of the House Basic Research Subcommittee. Throughout his life and career, Steve Schiff dedicated his time and talents to make life better for the people of New Mexico and for this fellow Americans. Even as he waged his final courageous battle against cancer, he continued his efforts to make life better for

families across this country. This Act is just one piece of his legacy and demonstrates how the Congress and the Administration can work together to help continue U.S. leadership in science and technology. I am pleased to sign it into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
July 29, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 1273, approved July 29, was assigned Public Law No. 105-207.

Statement on Signing the Homeowners Protection Act of 1998 July 29, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 318, the Homeowners Protection Act, which will save many American families thousands of dollars over the lifetime of their home mortgages. This bill will enable homeowners to cancel private mortgage insurance ("PMI") that they no longer need and make sure they receive full disclosure of their right to cancel.

Mortgage insurance has helped expand homeownership by allowing homeowners to make lower downpayments. But far too many homeowners continue to pay for mortgage insurance long after they have built enough equity so that the lender has little risk of loss. This bill would address that problem by making sure that homeowners have the right to cancel PMI, or by making that cancellation automatic, when homeowners build up enough equity in their homes. For a family that buys a \$160,000 home, this bill would ensure savings of \$1,600 if they do not move or refinance for 15 years.

Since I took office, homeownership has climbed to its highest rate in American history. But now is not a time to rest. I have set a national goal of helping 8 million new families move into homes of their own by the year 2000. Lowering the cost of homeownership is one more way we are helping America's working families. That is why I am pleased to sign this homeowner- and consumer-friendly legislation.

NOTE: S. 318, approved July 29, was assigned Public Law No. 105-216.

**Statement on the Death of
Jerome Robbins**

July 29, 1998

Hillary and I are deeply saddened to learn of the death of Jerome Robbins. Like so many Americans, our lives were enriched immeasurably by his artistic genius. Through his brilliant choreography, he brought the joy and passion of the human experience to millions, lifting American theater and dance to new heights. And in the treasury of timeless masterpieces he leaves behind—from “Fancy Free” and “On the Town” to “West Side Story” and “Fiddler on the Roof”—his creative spirit will live forever.

**Memorandum on Outreach Actions
to Increase Employment of Adults
with Disabilities**

July 29, 1998

*Memorandum for the Attorney General, the
Secretary of Health and Human Services, the
Chair of the Equal Opportunity Commission,
the Administrator of the Small Business
Administration*

*Subject: Outreach Actions to Increase
Employment of Adults with Disabilities*

As we commemorate the eighth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), we have much to celebrate. This landmark civil rights law is making it possible for millions of Americans to participate more fully in society—through employment, access to public facilities, and participation in community and leisure activities—and to do their part to make us a stronger and better country. At the same time, we are reminded that significant challenges remain. Far too many of the 30 million working-age adults with disabilities are still unemployed, especially those with significant disabilities.

To address employment barriers for people with disabilities, I issued Executive Order 13078 on March 13, 1998, establishing the National Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities. The Task Force will issue in November the first in a series of reports on what the Federal Government can do to help bring the employment rate of

adults with disabilities into line with that of the general population. The Task Force already has identified important ways to reduce barriers to work for people with disabilities, and I hereby direct you to act on these findings.

First, although awareness of the ADA is increasing among persons with disabilities, employers, and the general public, too many people still are not aware of their rights and responsibilities under the ADA. There is a particular need to educate the small business community, which employs most of the private work force and includes the vast majority of employers.

I therefore direct the Attorney General, the Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to expand public education regarding the requirements of the ADA to employers, employees, and others whose rights may be affected, with special attention to small businesses and underserved communities, such as racial and language minorities that may not have ready access to information that is already available.

Second, lack of adequate private health insurance options is a disincentive to leave Social Security programs for work. Few private health plans cover the personal assistance and other types of services that make work possible for many people with disabilities. Recognizing this problem, I proposed and the Congress passed a new Medicaid option last year that allows people with disabilities to buy into Medicaid without having to receive cash assistance. A number of States have expressed an interest in offering this new option and the Secretary of Health and Human Services has been working with them to do so. Much more, however, needs to be done to increase the public outreach and education activities about these important laws and options.

I therefore direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to continue to take all necessary actions to inform Governors, State legislators, State Medicaid directors, consumer organizations, employers, providers, and other interested parties about section 4733 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997.